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CONTRACTING OVERSIGHT,
CHAIRMAN

April 12, 2011

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I am writing to support the recent applications from the Missouri Department of Transportation (MODOT) for the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Program (HSPIR). MODOT is applying for funding that is now available because of reallocations from other states that have chosen not to utilize funding from previous grants.

High-speed rail would help to transform the economy, commerce and transportation of Missouri and the entire nation. Missouri has shown its leadership in beginning the buildout for high-speed rail through successful applications for upgrades to existing track. Missouri is now well-positioned to take the next steps to further upgrade the rail lines to improve rail service.

The MoDOT applications specifically address capital improvements for track sections on the current Amtrak line in Missouri between St. Louis, Jefferson City and Kansas City and would examine the viability of building a separate line that would be devoted solely to high-speed rail. The projects are essential to creating and supporting jobs that deliver both economic and transportation benefits to the heart of our country. The goal of the projects is to improve on-time performance and the future ability of trains to move at much faster speed than the track currently allows.

I am pleased that MoDOT is continuing its work with Union Pacific to coordinate the applications. This partnership has worked well thus far to ensure that high-speed rail is built properly and efficiently.

The new applications are significant steps towards establishing a high-speed rail corridor in Missouri. I support the efforts of MoDOT and will work to see that all HSPIR funding goes towards creating jobs, improving passenger rail and growing our economy. It is my hope that the applications are given all due favorable consideration.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill
United States Senator

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